

**City of Reading City Council
Regular Business Meeting
Monday, August 12, 2013**

Council President Francis G. Acosta called the meeting to order.

The invocation was given by Rev. John R. Francis of Christ Episcopal Church.

All present pledged to the flag.

ATTENDANCE

Council President Acosta
Councilor Corcoran, District 1
Councilor Sterner, District 3
Councilor Marmarou, District 4
Councilor Reed, District 5
City Auditor D. Cituk
City Solicitor C. Younger
City Clerk L. Kelleher
Mayor V. Spencer

Council President Acosta stated that Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz and Councilor Waltman are excused from attending this session due to a schedule conflict.

PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Council President Acosta announced that three (3) citizens were registered to address Council on non-agenda matters. He inquired if any Councilor objected to suspending the rule requiring non-agenda comment at the end of the Council meeting. As no one objected, the rule to require non-agenda comment at the end of the meeting was suspended. Council President Acosta reminded the citizens registered to speak about the remaining public speaking rules.

Rick Hancock, representing the United States Postal Service (USPS), stated that the USPS has determined that the two (2) postal facilities in Reading have been determined to be too oversized. The USPS is proposing to close the Carrier Annex, located at North 5th Street and Heister's Lane, and move its operations to the Yatron facility on North 13th Street. The main postal facility, located at North 5th and Washington Streets, will be closed. Both facilities will be listed for sale by the USPS. He stated that this was a financial decision made by the USPS.

The main facility is 56,000 sq. ft in a 70 year old building. The building is too large for the need of the USPS and the community. The USPS is looking for a 3000 sq. ft. rental space in the downtown area to move the retail component of the building. He stated that at this point in time the USPS invites public comment on the proposal. He stated that the public comment period is 30 days followed by a due diligence period. He stated that the process does not move quickly and that service will not be disrupted.

Maryann Ciarlone, of North 5th Street, quoted from the editorial in today's Reading Eagle. She called Council's attention to the envelopes she placed on the Council table before the meeting started. She stated that the envelope contains confidential material and she asked that the envelopes for Councilors Waltman and Goodman-Hinnershitz be returned to her.

Joe Eppihimer, of North 14th St, stated that he has been involved with the Hillside Playground Association his entire life. He stated that he has collected 600 petition signatures in opposition to the electrical repairs that the City is requesting for the Holiday Light Display. He stated that the lights are set up as a temporary display as the display is not permanent. He stated that the repairs will require Hillside to place junction boxes on the ball field within the park, which will create liability and safety hazards.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA & MINUTES

Council President Acosta called Council's attention to the agenda for this meeting, including the legislation listed under the Consent Agenda heading, and the minutes for the July 8th Regular Meeting of Council.

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to approve the minutes from the July 8th Regular Meeting of Council and the agenda, including the legislation under the Consent Agenda heading. The motion was approved unanimously.

Consent Agenda

A. Award of Contract – for the City Hall Access Control System to Berkshire Systems Group, 50 South Museum Road, Reading, PA 19607 to for a total bid price of \$141,588. (Purchasing/Police) PAGE 10

B. Award of Contract – for the sulfur dioxide to North Industrial Chemicals, Inc., 609 East King Street, York, PA 17405 who is the low bidder with total bid price of \$54,000. (Purchasing/Pub. Works) PAGE 12

C. Award of Contract - for the Sodium Hypochlorite - bulk to North Industrial Chemicals, Inc., 609 East King Street, York, PA 17405 who is the low bidder with total bid price of \$27,300. (Purchasing/Pub. Works) PAGE 14

D. Award of Contract – for the sodium hypochlorite in totes to North Industrial Chemicals, Inc., 609 East King Street, York, PA 17405 who is the low bidder with total bid price of \$27,300. (Purchasing/Pub. Works) PAGE 17

E. Award of Contract – for the Liquid Chlorine to Univar USA, Inc., 532 East Emmaus Street, Middletown, PA 17057 who is not the low bidder with total bid price of \$117,095. Univar was not the lowest bidder; however, Univar was selected due to prior problems with the lowest bidder that clogged regulators, poor tank quality and could cause potential permit violations. (Purchasing/Pub. Works) PAGE 20

F. Award of Contract – for the sodium hydroxide to Univar USA, Inc., 532 East Emmaus Street, Middletown, PA 17057 who is the low bidder with total bid price of \$25,200. (Purchasing/Pub. Works) PAGE 22

G. Award of Contract – for the free flowing potassium permanganate to Univar USA, Inc., 532 East Emmaus Street, Middletown, PA 17057 who is not the low bidder with total bid price of \$136,440. Univar was not the lowest bidder; however, Univar was selected due to prior problems with the lowest bidder that clogged regulators, poor tank quality and could cause potential permit violations. (Purchasing/Pub. Works) PAGE 25

H. Award of Contract – for the oxychlorine compound in totes (sodium chlorite based liquid shipped in 250-gallon totes) to Water Engineering Services, Inc. (Purchasing/Pub. Works) PAGE 29

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Mayor Spencer read the report distributed to Council at the meeting. In summary:

- Attended a meeting on the repair of the Penn Street Bridge
- Held an employee appreciation day at the Fightin Phillies ballgame
- Announced his availability for meetings with citizens each Tuesday from 1-2 pm. Call the Mayor's staff for scheduling.
- Attended the 6th and Amity community meeting
- Held meetings with a private community development group

Councilor Reed questioned notification of the meetings with the private community development group, as the press was informed about these meetings before Council was informed. She took issue with the lack of notice about these meetings, as the body of Council should be informed before the press is informed.

Council President Acosta stated there was also miscommunication about the schedule change for these meetings.

Mayor Spencer stated that the private company selected the parties it wished to meet with.

Mayor Spencer and Council President Acosta stated that the firm is evaluating an up and coming city along with a financially distressed city. He expressed the belief that Reading may not be distressed enough to be considered for their program.

AUDITOR'S REPORT

City Auditor Cituk read the report distributed to Council at the meeting covering the following:

- 2013 2nd Quarter Traffic Fines Motor Code update
- 2013 2nd Quarter Franchise Fees update
- Property Tax collection which is showing an 84.8% collection rate, compared to the collection rate of 86.7% in 2012. Property Tax is budgeted at 89%.

Council President Acosta asked the Auditor to keep Council apprised about the collection of property taxes and the validity of the projections placed in the 2014 budget.

Mayor Spencer stated that the City expected a decline in Property Tax collection, due to the change in collection practices used by Portnoff and the County Treasurer. He stated that the County Treasurer has the ability to undertake stronger collection procedures but has not yet implemented them.

Councilor Marmarou inquired if the Mayor's Office sent request letters to non-profits this year. Mayor Spencer stated that the letters were sent and the Auditor stated that he would report on collections stemming from the letters in his next report.

REPORT FROM DEPT. DIRECTORS, BOARDS, AUTHORITIES, & COMMISSIONS

None.

ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE

Bill No. 34-2013 - amending Chapter 11, Housing, of the Codified Ordinances to include electronic filing, collections and collection costs (PMD/Law) *Advertised July 29, 2013 PAGE 35*

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Corcoran, to enact Bill No. 34-2013.

Bill No. 34-2013 was adopted by the following vote:

Yeas: Corcoran, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Acosta, President - 5

Nays: None - 0

Bill No. 38-2013 - amending Chapter 13, Licenses, Permits and General Business Regulations, §13-116, of the Codified Ordinances to include collections which allows delinquent accounts of ninety (90) days or more to be given to a collections agency and subject to collection costs and renumbering the remaining sections as necessary as attached in Exhibit A. (Police) *Advertised July 29, 2013 PAGE*

Councilor Corcoran moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to enact Bill No. 38-2013.

Bill No. 38-2013 was adopted by the following vote:

Yeas: Corcoran, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Acosta, President - 5

Nays: None - 0

INTRODUCTION OF NEW ORDINANCES

PENDING

A. Bill No. -2013 – vacating a portion of Moss Street, as described in Exhibit A and removing this portion of Moss St from the City’s topographical map (**Law**) (PAGE 84) ***Introduced at the 6-24 regular meeting***

B. Bill No. 35-2013 - approving, adopting and enacting substantive changes to the existing city ordinances in conjunction with the adoption of the Code of the City of Reading (City Clerk/Law) **Scheduled for enactment August 26th**

C. Bill No. 36-2013 - approving the codification of a complete body of legislation for the City of Reading, County of Berks, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, as revised, codified and consolidated into titles, chapters and sections by General Code, and consisting of Chapters 1 through 600, together with an Appendix, are hereby approved, adopted, ordained and enacted as a single ordinance of the City of Reading, which shall be known and is hereby designated as the “Code of the City of Reading,” hereinafter referred to as the “Code.” **Scheduled for enactment August 26th**

Council President Acosta read the following ordinance into the record:

A. Ordinance – amending the 2013 Position Ordinance by eliminating two Equipment Operator II positions in the Streets Division of the Department of Public Works and creating two Equipment Operator II positions in the Solid Waste and Recycling Division of the Department of Public Works. (Bus Analyst) PAGE 88

B. Ordinance – authorizing the execution of the Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement between the City and the Reading School District for the recycling collection service as well as any and all other required documents to facilitate and effectuate said recycling collection service. (Law) PAGE 90

RESOLUTIONS

A. Resolution 61-2013 - appointing Ricky Denunzio to the Stadium Commission (**Nom & Appts**) PAGE 92

B. Resolution 60-2013— appointing Callie White to the Environmental Advisory Council (**Nom & Appts**) **PAGE 93**

Councilors Marmarou and Reed spoke about the experience and qualifications of the appointees.

Resolution No. 60 and 61-2013 were adopted by the following vote:

Yeas: Corcoran, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Acosta, President - 5

Nays: None - 0

C. Resolution 62-2013 – appointing Toni Albert to the Library Board (**Nom & Appts**) **PAGE 94**

Councilors Marmarou and Reed spoke about the experience and qualifications of this appointee.

Council President Acosta announced that he must abstain from this vote, as Ms. Albert is his supervisor at his place of employment.

Resolution No. 62-2013 was adopted by the following vote:

Yeas: Corcoran, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Reed, Sterner - 4

Nays: None – 0

Abstention - Acosta, President - 1

COUNCIL COMMENT

Councilor Sterner thanked those speaking at tonight's meeting. He stated that while he appreciates Mr. Eppihimer's attention to the Hillside Holiday light display issues, many of his statements were inaccurate. He described his and the City's efforts to address the safety issues associated with the light display and he explained that correcting issues will avoid liability for the Hillside Association and the City. He stated that junction boxes do not need to be installed in the ball field. He stated that the Administration is assisting by working with the IBEW to provide technical assistance to make the repairs required.

Councilor Reed announced the Centre Park community meeting scheduled for August 14th at 6 pm at the Artifacts Bank, 702 North 5th Street. She also described the community meeting in response to the recent murder in the Centre Park area.

Council President Acosta reviewed the upcoming meeting schedule.

Councilor Sterner moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to adjourn the regular meeting of Council.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk